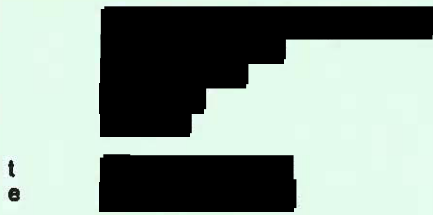


## Bob Hinshelwood



R.D. Hinshelwood has been Professor in the Centre for Psychoanalytic Studies, University of Essex since 1997. Previously he was a Consultant Psychotherapist in the NHS for many years and eventually Director of the Cassel Hospital.

He has written widely on clinical and theoretical psychoanalysis; and has a special interest in the relevance of psychoanalysis to social science, using the group relations and social defence system perspectives. His work has been largely with mental healthcare institutions, although he has a strong theoretical interest in the concepts used, and useable, in bridging the gap between individual psychoanalytic psychology and organisational dynamics and cultures. Twenty years ago he published *What Happens in Groups* (1987) following his work in therapeutic communities, and more recently *Suffering Insanity* (2004) about the psychological impact on professional carers in mental health and the further impact on organisational culture and structure.

## Systems, Culture and Experience: Understanding the Divide between the Individual and the Organisation

Group relations is more than 60 years old formed from two roots - psychoanalysis and Kurt Lewin's field theory. The later has subsequently been replaced by systems theory since Eric Miller and Ken Rice's *Systems of Organisation* (1967). The two roots do not necessarily live easily together, and a tension remains between focusing on the individual and focusing on the system or organisation. The evidence for the difficulty of this tension is the search which has endured from the beginning of group relations to find an effective bridging concept between the two approaches. I follow Bion's notion of schism as an avoidance of painful, conflicted ideas, the reality-based 'developmental idea'. The development of the understanding of reality demands acceptance of often difficult ideas which may represent conflict. This has been exemplified in many cases, including the classic studies by Miller and Gwynne (1972), and by Higgin and Bridger (1984). I shall also consider, from this point of view, Elliott Jaques movement in the course of his career from a deeply psychoanalytic view in the 1940-1950s based on the discoveries of individual psychoanalysis, to his 'recanting' in 1995. Finally, I shall attempt to make some comments on the basic fracture line in systems psychodynamics and whether there is a developmental idea which can lead to a separation along it.